

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, ELAB, PO
SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: SA CARNEIRO'S MADRID FORAY
YIELDS NO WINNERS

REF: PONTA DELGADA 019 (DTG 211900Z JAN 77)

SUMMARY: IN SUMMING UP THE IMPACT OF HIS MADRID VISIT,
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADER SA CARNEIRO HAS CHARGED THE GOVERNMENT
AND THE SOCIALISTS WITH OVERREACTION. THE POLITICAL BALANCE
SHEET, HOWEVER, SHOWS ONLY LOSERS. THE SOCIALISTS SPOILED THE
PSD INITIATIVE AT THE EXPENSE OF INCREASED POLITICAL CYNICISM;
SA CARNEIRO SERVED UP ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HIS INFLEXIBILITY.
END SUMMARY.

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1. SA CARNEIRO SUMS IT UP: IN A MAJOR INTERVIEW APPEARING
JAN 21 IN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST DAILY "A CAPITAL," SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC LEADER SA CARNEIRO ASSESSED THE POLITICAL SCENE
IN THE WAKE OF THE MADRID TEMPEST. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:
-- THE MADRID SYNDROME: THE GOVERNMENT AND THE SOCIALISTS
OVERREACTED TO SA CARNEIRO'S MADRID VISIT FOR POLITICAL

PURPOSES BEST KNOWN TO THEM.

-- PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION: DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PSD WAS NEVER INTENSIVE OR PRODUCTIVE. BUT A DEMOCRACY CANNOT AFFORD PERMANENT OBSTACLES TO UNDERSTANDING.

-- CDS-PS ALLIANCE: DISCUSSIONS PRIOR TO THE VOTE ON THE 1977 BUDGET PRODUCED A TACTICAL RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN THE CDS AND THE SOCIALISTS. THE RELATIONSHIP HAS CONTINUED.

-- A DEMOCRATIC UNDERSTANDING: IF DEMOCRACY IS TO SURVIVE, COMMUNICATION AMONG THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES MUST IMPROVE. THERE MUST BE A BASIC UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. THE PSD IS PREPARED TO COOPERATE IN SUCH AN UNDERTAKING, BUT THE SOCIALISTS ARE NOT INTERESTED.

-- PSD UNITY: THERE ARE NO DIVERGENCES WITHIN THE PSD; THE PARTY IS MORE UNIFIED THAN EVER.

-- THE PSD ALTERNATIVE: THE ONLY DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IS A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT. THE ONLY VIABLE GOVERNMENT IS ONE WHICH HAS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY PARTIES IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

-- LABOR POLICY: THE COMMUNISTS HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF SOCIALIST REFUSAL TO JOIN THE PSD IN JOINT LISTS IN UNION ELECTIONS.

2. REACTION TO AZOREAN DEMONSTRATIONS: THE GOVERNMENT ON JAN 21 ISSUED A STATEMENT CONFIRMING THAT THE RECENT INCREASE IN GASOLINE PRICES WAS EFFECTIVE IN "ALL PARTS OF THE NATIONAL TERRITORY" AND DEPLORING THE PROTEST DEMONSTRATION IN PONTA DELGADA (REFTEL). WHILE THERE IS SOME UNDERSTANDING HERE OF OTHER AZOREAN AND AMDEIRAN GRIEVANCES, E.G. THE INCREASE IN FREIGHT RATES, THERE IS LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR LOCALIZED PROTESTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGAINST THE GAS PRICE HIKE, WHICH APPLIES TO ALL PORTUGUESE. THE PRESS HERE HAS CHARGED SEPARATISTS ARE BEHIND THE PROTEST, WHICH SOME ARTICLES HAVE LINKED TO SEPARATIST LEADER JOSE ALMEIDA.

3. COMMENT: BOTH THE SOCIALISTS AND SA CARNEIRO SAY THEY CONSIDER THE MADRID EPISODE CLOSED. AS THE DUST SETTLES, THE BALANCE SHOWS NO REAL WINNERS. THE SOCIALISTS SPOILED SA CARNEIRO'S BID FOR AN INTERNATIONAL COUP AT THEIR EXPENSE BUT AT THE PRICE OF INCREASED POLITICAL CYNICISM. SA CARNEIRO BENEFITED SLIGHTLY FROM BEING THE VICTIM BUT AT THE EXPENSE OF SERVING UP ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HIS OWN INFLEXIBILITY. CARLUCCI

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